



Next Steps:

I tested positive for COVID-19.
What can I do to help notify my
close contacts of their exposure?

Notifying your own close contacts of their exposure to COVID-19 can help limit the spread in your community.

Who should I notify?

First, you need to determine the time period during which you could have exposed others.

- If you have symptoms, you were able to spread COVID-19 starting **two days before your first symptoms started**.
- If you have not had any symptoms, you were able to spread COVID-19 starting **two days before your positive COVID-19 test was taken**.
- You should notify anyone with whom you had **close contact while able to spread COVID-19**.

Close contact is defined as any of the following interactions:



Having direct
physical contact
with someone.
(e.g. hug, kiss,
handshake)



Being within 6
feet of someone
for 15 minutes
total in a day.



Having contact with your
respiratory secretions.
(e.g. coughed/sneezed on, contact with
dirty tissue, sharing a drinking glass,
food, towels, or other personal items)



Living with or spent
the night with
someone.



What do I tell my close contacts?

- A 14-day quarantine remains the safest option for close contacts. Quarantine may be shortened to 10 days, provided people still monitor for symptoms for the full 14 days. Quarantine may be shortened further to 7 days if a person receives a negative test result (PCR or antigen) that was collected on day 6 or 7.
- If your close contacts are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, meaning it has been at least two weeks since they received their last dose in the vaccine series, they do not have to quarantine. However, they should:
 - Get tested 5-7 days after close contact with someone with COVID-19, even if they don't have symptoms.
 - Wear a mask in public indoor spaces for 14 days after exposure or until they receive a negative COVID-19 test result.
 - Monitor for symptoms for 14 days after their last close contact.
 - Isolate at home if they develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19.
- Your contact may receive a call from public health who will ask your contact some questions and provide additional information. **Please ask your contact to answer the phone call.**
- The DHS fact sheet called "[Next steps: close contacts of someone with COVID-19](#)" will provide more details for what to do to protect others.
- If your contact has additional questions, they can contact their primary care provider, local health agency, or visit the Wisconsin DHS [COVID-19 Website](#).



What if I want to remain anonymous but still notify my close contacts?

There is an online tool called **"Tell Your Contacts"** that allows for **anonymous text or email notifications**.

To send notifications from this tool:

1. Visit tellyourcontacts.org/.
2. Select **email** or **text** notification.
3. Enter your contacts' information and exposure date.
4. Select either the pre-written message or customize your own. You do not need to enter your name.
5. Send your message.





Next Steps: after you are diagnosed with COVID-19

- You can be diagnosed with COVID-19 in the following ways:
 1. A doctor tells you that you have it based on your symptoms and exposures. **OR**
 2. You have a positive lab test that detected the virus in your nose. (**NOTE:** A positive antibody blood test means you likely had COVID-19 in the past.)
- After being diagnosed with COVID-19, even if you don't have symptoms, you will need to separate yourself from other people in your home, also called "isolation," and self-monitor until you are no longer able to spread COVID-19 to others.

How do I isolate at home?

- **Stay home (or at some other location approved by public health).** Do not go to work, school, or public areas.
- **Separate yourself from people and animals in your home.** As much as possible, you should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. If possible, you should use a separate bathroom.
- **Do not share personal household items** like dishes, drinking glasses, eating utensils, towels, or bedding. After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water.
- **Postpone all non-essential medical appointments until you are out of isolation.**
- **Keep a list of people you had contact with when you were sick.** This can be helpful for identifying people who may have gotten COVID-19 while spending time with you. This process is called "contact tracing."
- **Wash your hands often and practice good hygiene.** Clean high touch surfaces every day.
- **Wear a face mask or covering if you need to be around other people.**
- **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough and sneeze.** Throw the tissue in the trash and then wash your hands.

Please see next page for
more information!



When is my home isolation over?



You have been **fever-free** for **at least 24 hours** without using medicine that reduces fevers

AND



Your other **symptoms** have **improved** for at least 24 hours

AND



At least 10 days have **passed** since you first had symptoms



What if I never have symptoms?

You should stay isolated for at least 10 days after you were tested.



How do I self-monitor?

- If you feel sick, watch to see if your symptoms get worse. Get medical care if your symptoms get worse or if you have [emergency warning signs](#). If you are having a medical emergency, call 911. Notify 911 that you have COVID-19.
- If you were diagnosed, but never felt sick, watch for any symptoms of COVID-19 during your isolation period. Report any new symptoms to your local health department, as this may affect your instructions for home isolation.



How long am I contagious to others?

- You can spread COVID-19 to others beginning **two days before your symptoms start** until **a few days after you recover**.
- Even if you never develop any symptoms, you may be able to spread COVID-19 to others.

Did you have close contact with someone while you had COVID-19?

That person should stay home and watch for symptoms for 14 days after they last had close contact with you. There is additional guidance to shorten quarantine further. If they have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, they may not have to quarantine. For more information, visit our [COVID-19: Close Contacts webpage](#).



